



Meeting Notes

Golden Gardens Bathhouse Renovation: Community Meeting #1 January 30, 2003, 6:30 to 8:00 PM, at Golden Gardens Bathhouse

PRESENT: Nineteen members of the community; many members of the Project Advisory Team (PAT), and Parks staff members, a total of 33 attendees.

Golden Gardens Park's Value and Future:

Kathie Huus, Seattle Parks NW Geographic Parks and Recreation Manager, reviewed the history of the Park, its heavy use by highly diverse communities, past problems with inappropriate use of the Park (e.g. illegal beach fires, vandalism) and progress in rectifying these activities, and Parks' plans for continued involvement of teens and other community groups in developing and enhancing the Park.

History of Golden Gardens Bathhouse:

Susan Boyle, principal of BOLA Architecture & Planning, the project designers, presented the firm's research on the Bathhouse's use over the years since its construction in 1929. She described the creation of the park in 1907 as a terminus for the street car line serving the new Sunset Hills real estate development of Harry Treat, and the subsequent purchase of the Park by the City in 1923 from his widow.

The Bathhouse itself was designed in the office of the Park Engineer as a utilitarian and durable structure, constructed by W.B. Erskine, and opened to the public in 1929. It served swimmers at the Park as a changing and toilet facility until the late 1960s.

The site around the Bathhouse has supported a wide variety of activities over the years. Most obvious in summer are beach volleyball games in the sand toward the water, basketball pickup games on the small court to the north of the Bathhouse, and picnicking nearby the structures south of the concessions stand at the south end of the Bathhouse. More recently, a number of volunteer groups have been working to restore native plantings in the Park, to restore the wetlands now well-established at the north end of the Park, and to educate visitors about marine life found along the shore. In the past few years, the Bathhouse—dubbed the Brickhouse—has supported a number of teen programs. Teens have produced a variety of music events here, as well as offering a drop-in recreation setting to visiting teens. The lack of public transportation to the Park has limited teen access to some extent; because the building is unheated at present, the teen programs have operated primarily in summer months.

Programming for the Renovated Bathhouse:

Working with the Project Advisory Team (PAT), Parks is proposing programming for the renovated Bathhouse in the following areas: Environmental learning and stewardship for teens and others through involvement with native plant and wetlands restoration, marine ecology, and beach geology; activities for teens in art, recreation, and music (ARM); gathering space for public and private (rental) use; and food service offering year-round refreshment at the

concessions area and catering for parties meeting in the Bathhouse's multi-purpose space. An attendee asked if the neighborhood could obtain grants to augment the services provided by the concessionaire; Parks project manager responded that grants could be used to purchase kitchen and catering equipment or other equipment not included in the construction contract.

Design Concepts and Ideas:

Susan Boyle presented the current design concepts, developed with input from the Project Advisory Team members; she also reviewed the Building Program, a document that lists the spaces to be developed within the existing walls of the Bathhouse and their characteristics or attributes.

Meeting attendees asked numerous questions and raised some important issues for the design team and Parks to consider:

Concerns about how Parks will operate the facility on high-use summer days: won't we be overwhelmed with visitors? There is already a shortage of parking on these high-use days.

Will we incorporate any use of solar energy in the renovation? *(Parks will be conducting a sustainability charette with the design team, building operators and users, and representatives from City Light's energy conservation unit and the Office of Sustainability and Environment.)*

Will the renovated building contribute to light pollution at the beach and affect observation of the stars and planets? *(Parks' standards for lighting require full-cutoff fixtures for outdoor site lighting; lighting inside the building will be designed for standard interior lighting levels.)*

Amy Carlson, teen volunteer at the Bathhouse/Brickhouse, expressed concern that there might not be enough room for the stage that music groups have been using for concerts in the renovated multi-purpose space. She also expressed concern that teens will be displaced by other users of the facility. *(Kathie Huus stated that teens and teen programming are integral parts of Parks' and the community's plans for the renovated building. Kathie has allocated funds to the teen programs at the Bathhouse for this coming summer, allowing them to continue until Labor Day or a bit later in September.)*

Will the volleyball courts on the beach be disrupted by construction or by the new design? *(No, they will be maintained.)*

Several neighbors expressed concern that noise levels at the renovated facility will be high; they felt that adherence to the Seattle Noise Ordinance wouldn't be sufficient to prevent annoyance from noise, and wanted adjacent property owners to be involved in setting a noise policy.

Concerns regarding security at the renovated building were expressed as well: vandalism has been a significant problem in the Park over the years, noise as well. How will Parks staff the building? How will Parks protect the building against vandalism? *(Terri Burns, Coordinator of Ballard Community Center, responded that Parks has similar concerns and that the design will address resistance to vandalism. She also noted that Parks will staff the facility as they do other community buildings, and that the building will not be open without staff in attendance.)*

One attendee suggested a source of used brick if the project needed some: the Sunset Hotel in Ballard is undergoing remodeling or demolition; the used brick was offered to the Bergen Place Park project, but not needed; check with the Olsens at Sunset Hotel if interested.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:30 PM

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